

Exhibit 23

Gmail - Professional complaint against GrubStreet Director

7/16/20, 10:59 AM

162 Boylston Street, 5th Floor

Boston, MA 02116

617.695.0075 (Main)

From: Eve Bridburg <eve@grubstreet.org>

Sent: Tuesday, July 03, 2018 12:34 PM

To: Dawn Dorland <dawndorland@gmail.com>

Cc: Ian Chio <ian@grubstreet.org>

Subject: Re: Professional complaint against GrubStreet Director

Dawn,

Thank you for bringing this to our attention. I've forwarded your email to Ian Chio, our Director of Finance and Administration (which includes HR). He will be in touch with you next week after the holidays.

Sincerely,

Eve

On Jul 2, 2018, at 9:12 PM, Dawn Dorland <dawndorland@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Eve,

I hope this email finds you well. I was very sorry, after a 10-year streak of attending and teaching at the Muse and the Marketplace conference, not to join you this spring (I had a baby in April).

It pains me to write you under these circumstances, Eve, but I must file a complaint of professional misconduct against your Director of Race and Advocacy, Sonya Larson. Two independent arts organizations have now substantiated my claim that Sonya plagiarized my writing in her short story, "The Kindest," which I became aware of only a month ago. As a GrubStreet constituent--originally and for years interacting as a GrubStreet student

with Sonya, and since 2014 as a Muse presenter and online instructor--I find Sonya's theft of my text while employed as a GrubStreet director problematic, to say the least. I am compelled to bring my concerns to you, Eve, and/or your human resources professional (if you could refer me), in order to protect other writers who might have shared their creative materials with Sonya in workshop or in artistic friendship.

The other prong of my complaint relates to Sonya's treatment of me at the 2017 Muse conference, when she was Assistant Director. Sonya and I had had an artistic conflict before the conference (concerning the same story, in which I have now discovered plagiarism), but well ahead of the conference I had taken pains to mend things with her. After my having been invited and traveled from LA to teach two sessions at the 2017 Muse, however, Sonya avoided me and later would not even greet me when we ended up face-to-face. "Hi, Sonya," I said, and she about-faced (I can provide a witness). I at first found Sonya's behavior petty and unprofessional, unbecoming of a leader. Later, I became quite distressed. Nevertheless, despite this inconsiderate treatment by the very person who had invited me to present at the conference, I returned and taught my second session on the final day of the Muse. Sonya's physical ghosting--she looked right through me--at the Muse conference, however, had lasting effects, causing me a panic attack that night and lasting insomnia.

You might share my shock that someone with Sonya's warmth, apparent integrity and long reputational history as a writer's advocate would feel entitled to another writer's material and would conduct herself this way. That, I assure you, has made this long episode all the more painful. Unfortunately, the evidence of Sonya's plagiarism and other unprofessional conduct is clear. Yet another interaction that gives me pause is a conversation in which Sonya instructed me, as someone she perceives to be white, not to write about race (I am happy to provide you these emails, sent from Sonya's GrubStreet account). Even before becoming pregnant in July last year, the cumulative effect of these incidents is that I did not feel welcome returning to the Muse, which is something I thought you would very much like to know.

Eve, I urge you to initiate whatever personnel policies GrubStreet has in place for complaints of this magnitude. In the absence of such policies, however, I might suggest persuading Sonya to apologize to me formally, or GrubStreet's facilitating a reconciliation between us. If your reaction to my allegations is extreme, I would also be comfortable with your suspending Sonya from her position as Director of Race and Advocacy and/or Director of the Muse Conference briefly, with or without pay.



As a long-time member of the GrubStreet community--and now, in Los Angeles, a proud Grubbie expat--I hope and trust that you will take my complaint to heart, despite the reputational pushback and defense of Sonya that I know you must feel. I come to you and the GrubStreet staff and board vulnerably, Eve, trusting that you will hear and honor the pain and distress that one of your leaders has caused another writer financially (we spent our last \$2500 retaining a lawyer to help me defend my work), professionally, and not least, personally.

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If I don't hear back from you by the end of business tomorrow (Eastern), I will call you after the Fourth.

I apologize for bringing you this very difficult situation. I wish it weren't so.

Kindly,

Dawn

857-234-2650 (mobile)

I check email once daily at noon.